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RE: Raised Bill 5630, An Act Concerning the Establishment of an Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner (ADHP).

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter, and members of the Committee;

I am a resident of Shelton, Connecticut, and have been a practicing dental hygienist for over 30 years. I am currently a dental hygiene educator, and am obtaining my Master's degree in dental hygiene education. *During my years of teaching in a clinic which serves the public, most of whom do not have dental insurance, I have seen a great disparity in their dental history and present state of dental disease as compared to the clients I had seen in private practice.* Most of these people never made it through the doors of a dental office, except when they were in pain and an extraction of an untreated tooth was the only option.

In the clinic, we complete their dental hygiene care, and then are faced with the quandary of where to refer these patients in dire need of dental care. Recently, noticeable influxes of patients are coming into the clinic that used to have dental insurance and regular care. Benefits have been dropped, people have been laid off from work and their dental needs grow with time. The waiting time in clinics that are affordable is long, and people remain in need and in pain.

The raised Bill 5630 presents a viable option which could substantially increase access to care for many. The Master's level curriculum for this mid-level provider will provide Connecticut with professionals who are well-prepared to meet the needs of many people suffering without dental care, and equally important, *providing preventive and operative care to patients, especially children, in the early stages of dental disease, before pain and tooth loss become inevitable.*

I urge you to consider this very important Bill for the citizens of Connecticut.

Very Sincerely Yours,

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